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Dear Friends:

In the space of two short months I have gone through a calendar year of weather and a school year of experience. My first sight of Mt. Zion was hardly as expected from years of singing "There is a green hill far away", for all the hills were white with an unusual snow. Unable to land as scheduled, I had an extra trip over the Jordan valley by plane and a special taxi ride over icy roads from Damascus to Amman. The roads were blocked to the Jordan with two-metre drifts; the taxis and buses all were waiting for the king's men to clear the road so that he could return from Jerusalem. The third car into Jerusalem brought three intrepid Americans to the American School and the nearby American Colony. A week later the spring flowers were to be seen along the Jerusalem-Jericho road! Commuting to Jericho for the dig was about the distance of the average Philadelphian or Chicagoan in his daily work habits. The climate made the difference! Leaving Jerusalem in mid-winter with its February freeze, every eight kilometers took us ahead another month in the calendar, as it were, so that we were finally in mid-summer and July in Jericho, if the thermometers were correct. Now at Eastertide it is really spring in the Holy City, and Jericho is about ready to be abandoned for "Hell's Kitchen", as they say. The wild flowers having brightened the desert wilderness for a brief span have faded away and the brown fingers of death are creeping up the hill toward Bethany.

Since we were among the first students in the post-war world, we had opportunities and privileges here that were quite undeserved. The many church libraries were opened to us as if we were members of their own orders or communions. The great Palestinian Museum with its wonderful lay-out and full staff seemed to have been endowed to cater to the one fellowship student daily. Then, with two archaeological tutors in the school, an absurd sense of importance comes to the student. But perhaps even that is part of the contagion of the land, wherein every refugee stands in the dignity of his former bit of land. How each is a person, in all the religious and sociological significance of that word, how neighborliness is still alive in a distraught world, is brought home to the isolationist American cliff dweller who lives in the spirit of Cain. The place of the individual is not lost sight of even in the great Church processions of this Holy Season.

There is hope in the air these days, that a real peace may come. The passes for 24 hours or 3 days are omens of good things to come. During Easter the pilgrims, especially the Jesuits, who are domiciled on the Israeli side of Jerusalem, had full freedom of movement! The most insignificant consular members and staff personnel came over as easily as General Riley. This week the Dominican students with Père de Vaux left for a twelve day archaeological trip to Israel. Science knows no Mandelbaum gates and takes no partisan chair.

That hope perhaps stems from the season. Easter was a climax for the pilgrimages of many religious persons and a grandiose spectacle for the curious tourist. There were many of both in Jerusalem last week. The bells of West and East sang in their own distinctive ways the jubilant chorus. Lighted crosses on both sides of the wall, on the Holy Sepulchre and on the Russian cathedral, were silhouetted against the dark sky of a waning Pascal moon, when finally we came home in the deserted city streets at 2:30 A.M. Easter morning.

But we are ahead of our story, Mr. Kee, the Two Brothers Fellow and I decided to go the limit on the Easter services. We attended eight services on Maundy Thursday beginning at 9:30 A.M. and arriving back at the ASOR at 10 P.M. The three footwashing services were by no means reduplicative. The simplicity of the Syrian, the brilliance of the Armenian, and the enthusiasms of the Greek were all part of the experience. A high point in personal piety came for several of us as we followed the humble Anglican litany of the Garden while in another corner of Gethsemane the Arab Lutherans were singing "Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross". And a few minutes later the Russian convent choir sang in proper surroundings that old favorite of Don Cossacks and Chapel choirs, the Russian Kyrie "Lord have mercy".

In the East, the Passion is crowded out by the joy of the Resurrection. The Crucifix is pushed temporarily into the background by the angels of the open tomb. Only the Latin processions along the Via Dolorosa on Good Friday and the Eastern burial services that same evening take great note of the day. The attendance at such services was far less than on Thursday or Saturday. Easter comes early in the week-end even when the calendars are synchronized as this year. The ceremony of the Holy Fire takes place at the Holy Sepulchre at noon on Saturday. Many pilgrims sleep there over Friday night to be sure of a blessed place in the morning. The chanting and the mourning of the crowd begins long before the processions and makes even the supports of the re-inforced walls reverberate. The combined procession of all the Eastern Churches gives a spectacle of vestments beyond our imaginations or the best equipped museums. Seated among the dignitaries of the city and the diplomatic corps we had a direct view into the edicule for an early glance at the Holy Perpetual Fire. Words cannot describe the enthusiasm of the people as that fire was passed from candle to candle and received on the faces of pilgrims to the cry of "Christos Anesti". Even the usher had to warn us to keep our seats lest we be stamped in the jubilant mob. Having just re-read Kinglake on the panic of 1835 most of us stood our ground firmly!

In the evening under a temporary tabernacle of brocaded hangings, the impecunious Abyssinian church brought forth its most gorgeous robes. For one hour this church which fails to have full recognition as a denomination among the celebrants at the Holy Sepulchre, held the spotlight. This word is used advisedly as the spotlight, flood-light and cameras of many photographers were there. Mr. Maynard Williams was around to most of the services working up an article for the December issue of the National Geographic. But the tom-toms, sistrum, and holy umbrellas together with the mournful chant give to this service a unique quality that is not duplicated by all the wild enthusiasm of the others. In this, as in many other processions, the representatives of the School followed behind the priests along with the other "dignitaries" (at least, this is what was said in fine print on the Mutasarrif's program schedule).

The Easter services in the Holy Sepulchre were a fine example of ecumenical co-ordination. Each procession from the Latin to the Maronite was timed so that it did not disrupt any important phase of another service. The power of concentration for simple western visitors was made difficult by the competing chants from many nooks and corners of the great church. But either because of the lateness of the hour or the surfeiting of the spirit, these midnight Easter services seemed like an anticlimax after the Holy Fire. Even more so was the 7:30 A.M. American-English service of the free churches before the Garden Tomb.

Jerusalem was crowded to the seams this Easter. The refugees had already taxed it to capacity. In the Armenian convent, for example, some two thousand are living where formerly less than two hundred monks lived. But the pilgrims from Greece and Egypt, as well as the West swelled it even more. Convents as far as Ramallah and Bethan were filled, and motels in Jericho and Amman were turning people away. Yet through it all the temper of the town remained sane. The friendly spirit prevailed, and the most hurried and harried visitor was made to feel at home in the oft-promised land.

The plight of the refugees on both sides of the lines has touched the hearts, and we all hope, the consciences of many in the West. But the Red Cross and the UN along with certain church organizations are making an effort at keeping up morale and distributing some of the bread of life. Our excavations have been both an archaeological and sociological project. Some thousand refugees have been given a fortnight of work through the cooperation of Dr. Kelso and the UN authorities. It is to be hoped that more than pilot projects will be possible in the near future. Even with peace, the economy of these countries will need help, and their morale, encouragement for a long while.

But all this seems to be a far cry from the activities of a School of Oriental Research! So far there have been few trips of the School other than to commute to Jericho. We are anticipating a trip to Petra and the Iron Age mining centers explored by Dr. Glueck. But we have lived up to our name in study and research. In these two months I've had at least a year's experience in archaeology, Roman history, Greek epigraphy, architecture, Byzantine monasticism and Eastern liturgics to list but a few of the subjects our "digs" and experiences have opened to us.

To read a book on archaeology is one thing, to get the dirt in your pockets and dust in your eyes is another thing. In the confusion of "book-larin'", I have hopes of building a project for ceramic terminology that may be helpful in the maze of literature now in use. To sit on a low stool and sort pottery out of the cofer is to give one a real sense of the value of pottery and the possibilities it lends for dating far beyond the abilities of the ablest lecturer.

To read of stratification and levels, sometimes enumerated with Roman numerals, sometimes with Greek letters or English letters, sometimes up and sometimes down, is to see archaeology as a great puzzle or pile of jack-straws. But to slice carefully through the earth and see the debris, the floor, the fallen ceiling, the burning all in succession and eventually in section is unforgettable.

To hear of several buildings even on one level is to hear conundrums. But to watch the stones in their re-used positions come out of mud walls at Nitla is to be convinced that archaeology is not a Jillettant's Pandora but an exact science. To be able to listen in on an archaeologist as he talks to himself (Mr. Baramki) or to slip up edgewise (invited of course) to an animated discussion between Baramki and Kelso is to get an impromptu lecture that surpasses the best classroom expositions.

I count myself fortunate to have as tutors two such friendly archaeologists as Dr. Kelso and Mr. Baramki. No question is too naive to be answered sincerely. No problem is so simple that they can't see the possible chagrin and confusion on the face of the beginner. No pet theory of the over-confident neophyte is too crazy to be discarded - at least without hearing and fair



trial. "Never discourage a young archaeologist" are words passed on by Dr. Kelso from the late Dr. Fisher. But the Wady Qelt exploration for the U.N. is responsibility enough for the time being, with all the other research problems staring me in the face. With a twelve hour day at the dig and a five hour night in the library, one begins to look for extra time in odd corners. Plenty of dirt, plenty of willing laborers, plenty of begging sites, but time is fleeting and money is scarce.

The old timers around here are as generous with time and advice as the regular staff. It was a treat to deliver a message for Dr. Kraeling to Director Harding and to Père De Vaux and so develop a friendship with the powers that be and with the great Palestinian archaeologist. Père Abol and Père Vincent, the venerable patriarchs of archaeology and topography have been most considerate and friendly. The latter's suggestions on the Wady Qelt explorations were well advised. The students from the Dominican School have frequently visited the dig. Father Saller of the Franciscans has likewise been a great encouragement in all our research and activities, especially regarding mosaics. The Eastern groups are perhaps less archaeologically minded than the Latins, but they too visited us at Jericho and their hospitality in the convents does justice to all expectations of the Orient.

The Clarks came back from Sinai the Tuesday of Holy Week and were able to attend most of the services. Dr. Clark left today for another month of work at Sinai while his wife stayed back to have a "shufti" at Jerusalem. She has been a hard worker on the manuscript project and will perhaps get a bit of vacation this way - not from her husband but from the confining routine of pagination and photography. Mr. Howard Kee returned from Sinai about a month ago and left yesterday for home. But he is going to "take the long way home" via Petra, Beirut, Aleppo, Istanbul, Athens, Mt. Athos, Florence and Paris in connection with his thesis. He also has several epigraphical projects from near Jericho which he hopes to publish in some journal in the near future.

Many visitors stayed at the School over Holy Week, and the American diplomatic corps made the School sitting room their collective headquarters during the holy season. Mrs. Clark and after her Mrs. Kelso worked very hard to make the school homelike again and they have succeeded beyond all expectations. The library is in fine shape through the liberal policy of the Board concerning binding and through the organizing abilities of Mr. Baramki. The visitors were proud of the American School and we hope that with more fellows and students next year, the member organizations will be still more proud to continue to co-operate in such a venture.

Mr. Kissling of the United Presbyterian mission in Ethiopia arrived last night and will be with us for the Petra trip and will assist on some of the architectural problems remaining in Jericho. It is to be hoped that someone in America will get the fever and enthusiasm to finish with another season that New Testament dig at Jericho which two Old Testament professors undertook. In all humility I can hardly say "thank-you" clearly enough for this opportunity for study and first hand experience in this land which is holy to three faiths.

C. Umhau Wolf. Fellow.